

# WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS

## FOR NORTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN COUNTIES

### October 2003



State of Wisconsin  
Department of Workforce Development  
Office of Economic Advisors

#### Much seasonal noise; little underlying economic change

**Editor's note:** The December issue of this newsletter will be the last one mailed in hard copy. If you wish to be notified each month when a new issue is published on the Internet, please call the editor at (608) 242-4885 or email him at [dan.barroilhet@dwd.state.wi.us](mailto:dan.barroilhet@dwd.state.wi.us). Also, you may or subscribe at [http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/lmi/WDA/wo\\_pubs.htm#To](http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/lmi/WDA/wo_pubs.htm#To).

In **Adams County**, the unemployment rate remains closer to typical levels than in most North Central counties. The majority of job losses in construction and leisure & hospitality were probably attributable to seasonal factors such as weather, students returning to school and workers leaving seasonal jobs.

The sharp drop in **Forest County's** unemployment rate brought it closer to typical levels than it has been at any point in the last 12 months. Over that time, rates have been more volatile than usual. Seasonal job losses in leisure & hospitality and information, professional, business & other services are expected, but neither sector has recovered from sharp losses in January and both remain below 2002 levels.

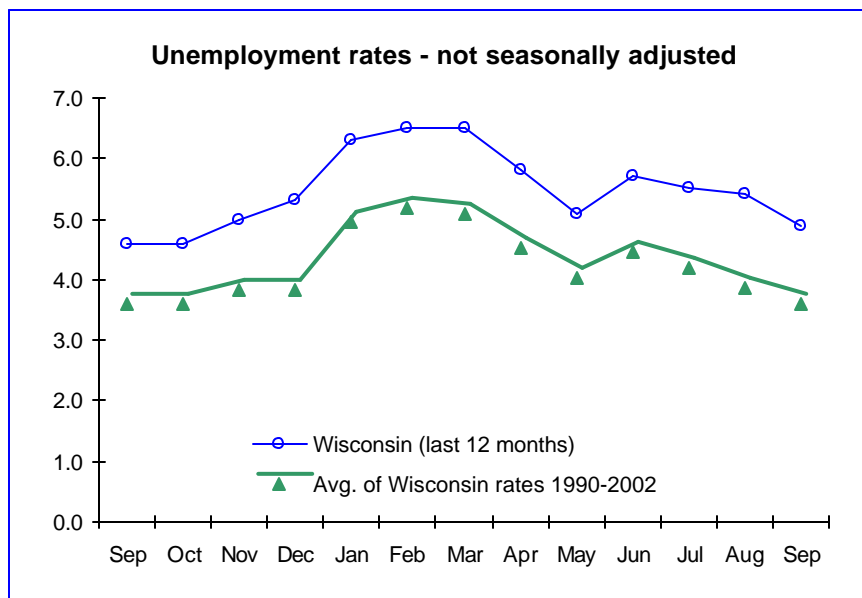
**Langlade County's** unemployment rate is further above typical levels than any other county in North Central Wisconsin and it is higher than it has been in any September from 1990 to 2002. Despite seasonal declines, leisure & hospitality and construction remain above last year's levels. Except a January jump, education & health services has been fairly quiet.

The unemployment rate declined in **Lincoln County**, as is typical for September, but remains higher than typical for the month. Leisure & hospitality shed seasonal jobs and remained as far above last year's levels as it had been this spring. Transportation, warehousing & utilities has been following last year's pattern fairly closely since May.

**Marathon County's** unemployment rate declined as it normally does in September, and remained about 0.4 percent higher than typical. Transportation, warehousing & utilities remains below last year's job levels, but continues to follow relatively similar seasonal patterns. Employment in education & health services is as high as it has been at any point since January 2002. In spite of seasonal declines, leisure & hospitality still has more jobs this year than last.

**Oneida County** unemployment rate was still above typical and was the second-highest September rate in the period from 1990 to 2002. Only last year's rate was higher. Leisure & hospitality shed more jobs this September than last September, but the sector still has more jobs than it did last year at this time. Comparing last September to this September, almost all of the job growth has been in leisure & hospitality (except a few jobs added in construction and financial activities). Manufacturing shed fewer jobs this September than last, but that may be attributable to the fact that it added fewer jobs this spring than last.

While **Portage County** remains somewhat above its typical unemployment rate for September, its rate seems to be following typical seasonal patterns fairly closely. The drop in leisure & hospitality employment was probably almost entirely seasonal. A sharp January drop in retail & wholesale trade has left the sector with fewer jobs for each month of 2003 than the same month of 2002, but the gap has been shrinking



since May. Manufacturing job gains were far smaller this summer than last, so seeing fewer September losses than last year isn't as encouraging as it seems at first sight. Over the summer, education & health services enjoyed strong job gains, but these seem to be erased by a puzzlingly harsh September.

For the first time since it jumped in December, **Vilas County's** unemployment rate has fallen significantly closer to typical levels for two months in a row. Much of the decline in leisure & hospitality employment was seasonal, but September was the first month in which the sector reported significantly fewer jobs than last year at the same time. Information, professional, business & other services shed far fewer jobs this September than last, but this summer's job gains were milder.

Generally, **Wood County's** unemployment rate has followed normal seasonal patterns while remaining higher than typical. Despite seasonal job losses, leisure & hospitality remains well above last year's levels. Manufacturing employment remains well below last year's levels; despite national reports of low inventories and strong orders, local manufacturing shows few signs of recovery. Education & health services shed jobs in September but still has many more than last year.

## Employment by industry estimates - not seasonally adjusted

	Wisconsin			Adams			Forest			Langlade			Lincoln					
	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change			
Total jobs, all indstries*	2,788,100	-10,400	-5,500	4,300	-60	0	3,400	70	-140	3,600	10	120	12,200	-90	0			
Const., min'g & nat. resources	127,700	-3,400	-7,800	290	-10	30	100	-10	-20	150	-10	10	480	-20	20			
Manufacturing	514,100	-6,900	-16,900	430	-20	-10	320	0	-20	510	-10	0	3,600	-50	-70			
Trade (wholesale & retail)	436,400	-5,600	6,600	530	0	-10	320	-20	-10	680	-10	30	1,750	-20	0			
Transport, Wrhsing, Utilities	105,700	1,500	-800	150	0	10	190	10	0	190	0	-10	340	20	-40			
Financial activities	158,700	-500	5,100	90	0	0	100	0	10	190	0	0	760	-10	10			
Education & health services	366,500	2,900	8,200	460	0	0	340	0	10	310	0	50	970	10	20			
Leisure & hospitality	248,400	-13,400	1,900	830	-100	60	200	-20	-60	280	-20	20	1,200	-50	70			
Info, prof, bus. & other srvc	434,600	-3,600	5,700	340	-10	-80	130	0	-60	300	10	0	1,010	0	10			
Government	396,000	18,600	-7,500	1,230	70	0	1,670	110	20	1,030	40	20	2,100	20	-10			
Civilian Labor Force**	3,087,200	-44,700	79,000	9,000	-200	260	5,000	20	-30	9,900	-70	20	15,000	-250	450			
Employed	2,936,400	-25,300	66,600	8,600	-170	220	4,700	100	-20	9,200	90	-70	14,200	-170	350			
Unemployed	150,800	-19,400	12,400	330	-30	30	250	-90	-10	700	-150	90	780	-80	90			
Unemployment rate (%)	4.9	-0.5	0.3	3.7	-0.3	0.3	5.1	-1.7	-0.1	7.1	-1.5	0.9	5.2	-0.5	0.5			
	Marathon						Oneida			Portage			Vilas			Wood		
	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change
Total jobs, all indstries*	70,200	-400	500	19,200	-750	250	34,500	1,380	400	8,800	-700	-370	44,400	230	260			
Const., min'g & nat. resources	3,000	0	0	1,510	-40	50	1,040	-50	-90	960	-30	20	1,720	0	-90			
Manufacturing	18,300	-400	300	1,300	-70	-180	6,200	30	-470	410	0	-110	7,800	-100	-390			
Trade (wholesale & retail)	14,200	-400	100	4,100	-130	-30	4,800	310	-100	1,420	-70	-80	6,300	100	-100			
Transport, Wrhsing, Utilities	2,800	100	-200	430	40	0	1,830	30	-60	110	20	-10	3,300	90	70			
Financial activities	4,300	0	0	570	0	20	4,000	-20	60	320	0	30	1,150	-10	80			
Education & health services	6,900	200	300	3,100	-20	-10	3,000	-80	90	730	0	20	11,200	-40	620			
Leisure & hospitality	5,100	-300	200	3,200	-700	530	4,000	-90	510	2,100	-740	-70	3,000	-120	210			
Info, prof, bus. & other srvc	8,100	-200	100	2,400	-70	-100	3,800	20	130	390	-10	-280	4,900	-50	40			
Government	7,500	600	-300	2,600	240	-30	5,900	1,220	330	2,400	140	120	5,100	360	-190			
Civilian Labor Force**	76,900	-1,270	1,910	23,000	-1,380	500	40,100	840	1,400	12,100	-720	460	41,500	-420	1,360			
Employed	74,000	-850	1,690	22,000	-1,240	620	38,600	1,350	1,320	11,700	-660	330	39,400	30	1,150			
Unemployed	2,900	-410	210	990	-140	-130	1,490	-510	90	460	-60	130	2,000	-450	200			
Unemployment rate (%)	3.8	-0.5	0.2	4.3	-0.4	-0.7	3.7	-1.4	0.1	3.8	-0.2	0	4.9	-1.1	0.3			

\*Includes jobs with employers in area. \*\* Includes labor force participants residing in area. Estimates are NOT seasonally adjusted. Current month estimates are preliminary.  
Numbers 2,000 and greater are rounded to nearest 100. Numbers under 2,000 are rounded to nearest 10. Sub-units may not add to totals due to rounding.